MONTEREY NEWS

March 2007
VOLUME XXXVII · Number 3

The Town

Building Department

At the February 12th Select Board meeting the District State Building Inspector, Gordon Bailey, met with Monterey Building Commissioner Don Torrico, and the Board of Selectmen to clarify the role and duties of the Building Commissioner and to air differing views regarding the execution of those duties.

Bailey's visit was precipitated by a discussion during the January 22nd Select Board meeting between Torrico and Select Board member Wayne Burkhart. At that meeting Burkhart expressed frustration about certain kinds of projects that the Building Commissioner believes require a building permit and Burkhart believes do not. At one point Torrico mentioned a project for a large woodshed at Gould Farm that required permitting. Burkhart responded in a heated manner that this was exactly the kind of thing that is bothering him, and he believes that it should be unnecessary to obtain a building permit for constructing a woodshed. Torrico stated that he is simply enforcing the State Building Code.

Select Board Chair Michael Storch objected to Burkhart addressing a project about Gould Farm while sitting on the Select Board. Burkhart grew more frustrated and asked, "How am I supposed to talk about these issues that I'm concerned about if I can't talk about specific projects?" Also, Burkhart pointed out that the Building Commissioner was the one who initially mentioned the woodshed project. Storch responded that he didn't know how Burkhart was to address his concerns, but that it was clear to him (Storch) that it was inappropriate to deal with a project under

Steve Rose

Clearing up after a February snow.

construction at his work place while sitting on the Select Board. Select Board member Jon Sylbert concurred and differentiated between speaking to philosophical differences in interpreting the State Building Code and speaking to a specific project in which Burkhart was involved.

In his own effort to clarify roles and duties, Select Board Chair Michael Storch contacted the State Ethics Board to ask about the legality of Burkharts' position. At the February 12th meeting Storch informed Burkhart, "I contacted the State Ethics Commission about your stringently asserting your right to voice your opinions while on the [Select] Board." Burkhart expressed surprise and dismay that Storch would contact the Ethics Commission without first talking to him, saying, "I certainly don't appreciate your process." Burkhart also strenuously disagreed about quotes that Storch attributed to him, stating, "The quote in this letter is a gross misstatement of my views. You have misquoted me let the record show. You have gone behind my back in contacting the Ethics Commission, and that is not helpful to the town." Storch agreed that Burkhart might have been misquoted but defended his actions, saying that when he initially said that Burkhart should recuse himself and Burkhart disagreed, then he felt that the next step should be to involve the Ethics Commission.

After listening to the proceedings, District State Building Inspector Gordon Bailey said that his role as the district representative of the State Building Commission is to answer questions that the local building inspectors have about the State Building Codes and to clarify issues regarding enforcement and interpretation. He also provides technical assistance, performs research, and reviews building departments. Bailey stated that in his opinion, "The State Building Code is not open to interpretation," and that "Mr. Torrico is responsible for implementation of the code." He went on to say that in his experience, "Your Building Commissioner is very good and consistent at applying the State Building Code." Bailey noted that this was not always the case in Monterey and said, "Often prior lax enforcement on the part of the local building department creates problems when a knowledgeable Building Commissioner comes on the scene."

Select Board member Jon Sylbert weighed in on the discussion, stating, "In Massachusetts there are a lot of onerous (or perceived to be) regulations, possibly due to insurance companies and not enough citizen participation in creating the Building Code, and a struggle ensues. It would probably be more appropriate to deal with the regulations by lobbying at the state level—not putting pressure on Don at the local level." Sylbert said that he believes that Torrico "has done a wonderful job and needs to be supported." Burkhart pointed out that he is a farmer and licensed construction supervisor and is involved in many building projects, which may be why he sees things differently than the other Board members. Gordon Bailey invited Burkhart to call or contact him if he would like to discuss any specific issue. Burkhart responded, "There is a lot of confusion in my mind about how some of these regulations come into being, but I certainly don't want to fire Don." Torrico stated, "Any time I have a question about a project or any issue, I run it by Gordon Bailey or the Town Counsel. I think that you may not be interpreting the regulations correctly." Torrico also questioned Burkhart about using the word "Gestapo" in referring to him when he was not in the room. Burkhart responded "I don't recall saying anything like that. So I can't answer your question."

In other Building Department news the Building Commissioner reported a

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discussion that he had with the Zoning Board of Appeals regarding making the application process to the ZBA easier. The ZBA and the Building Commissioner agreed that referring the applicant to the Planning Board prior to their submitting a ZBA application might be helpful. Planning Board chair Maggie Leonard (who happened to be on hand as your faithful reporter) agreed and commented that when reviewing an application with the Planning Board she was surprised that more applicants do not take advantage of the Planning Board's twice monthly meetings for consultations.

Tree Warden

At the February 5th Select Board meeting Tree Warden Roger Tryon submitted a proposal for planting trees in the following locations around town: on Fairview Road near the home of Barry and Kathy Carson; at the Parade Grounds at the intersection of Beartown Mountain Road and Fairview Road; on Beartown Mountain Road near the home of Elizabeth Wolfe; on Main Road near the Sheridan residence; at the Lake Garfield beach (with permission from the Parks Commission); between the General Store and the Post Office; next to the flagpole at the Town Hall; and on Tracy Brennan's property on Route 23 near the Monterey Kindergarten. Select Board member Wayne Burkhart asked Tryon to please make sure that the aforementioned landowners are consulted about the plantings and are sympathetic to the plans of the town.

During the February 12th Select Board meeting Tryon came in to discuss the proposed plantings. Since most of the proposed planting would occur in the town right-of-way Director of Operations Maynard Forbes was present for the discussion. Initially the Tree Warden balked at this, stating that "I am not opposed to asking landscaper designers or arborists for their opinions, but I don't believe that Maynard should be the deciding factor here." The Select Board stated that they were not asking Mr. Forbes' permission and that he was not the deciding factor, the board only requested his opinion as Director of Operations. Tryon then asked if the Highway Department would be able to do some of the cleanup work associated with the planting. Forbes responded that the Highway Department might be able to help out depending upon where the trees are to be planted and when. Tryon pointed out that a new backhoe was recently purchased by the Highway Department and that it would be much better for the town if it did not have to bear the expense of renting another one to plant the trees.

Director of Operations

Director of Operations Maynard Forbes meets with the Select Board each Monday. On February 5th he presented two different design possibilities for a salt and sand shed to be constructed at the Town Garage. One design is a barn-style building, and the other resembles a cross between a greenhouse and a Quonset hut. Initially the Quonset hut design was the less expensive of the two choices because instead of metal or stick frame construction it used concrete for the bottom half of the building. However, according to Select Board Chair Michael Storch, in the past year concrete prices have nearly doubled

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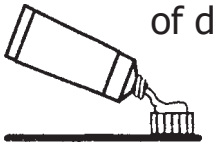

528-6520

Route 23 Monterey

making the barn-style design a viable and affordable option. The Select Board and Forbes will continue their research and make a presentation about the project at the annual Town Meeting in May.

Again with the Town Hall furnace. Forbes was asked to contact Gennari Heating and Plumbing again to investigate why a) sometimes the furnace conks out, and b) why it is very warm in some heating zones in the Town Hall and cold in others. At the February 12th meeting Forbes informed the Board that the furnace was full of soot and stopped working, and that it took a lot of parts being replaced to get it working again. A similar problem cropped up in December. Forbes stated that the furnace is old and inefficient and should have been replaced years ago. The recent bill for repairs was more than $600. The Select Board discussed whether they should wait until Town Meeting to get an appropriation to replace the old furnace, or to declare an emergency and replace it now. Forbes estimated that it would cost around $7,000 to purchase and install a new furnace. It was unanimously voted to wait until Town Meeting to get town approval for the expenditure unless the furnace dies in the meantime.

Forbes said that Gennari would be in the Town Hall on the 14th to look at possible problems with the heat zone setup to see what might be causing inconsistent heating. Stan Ross happened to stop by and asked if the heating system was ever flushed. He said that when he had a similar problem at his house flushing the system solved it. Gennari had to cancel the visit on the 14th due to the snowstorm and will reschedule.

Select Board Chair Storch complimented the Highway Department on recent road clearing efforts during snowstorms, and on their success at getting rid of the giant ice dams on Fairview Road. Forbes said that they used a special blade on the grader to break up the ice, which was one foot thick in areas.

Police Blotter

The Select Board meets with Police Chief Gareth Backhaus each Monday morning, On February 12th Backhaus reported that the speed sign trailer that was ordered through a Community Policing Grant would be delivered some time in March. It will be used to help make drivers aware of their driving speed and to encourage voluntary compliance with the posted speed limit.

Here is the list of activities of the Police Department over the past month: disabled motor vehicle on Sandisfield Road that was towed; reported larceny on Williams Lane; lockout on Hupi Road and at the Post Office; vehicle parked at the Town Beach for an extended period of time; complaint about an abusive tenant (police assisted tenant with removing their things); fender-bender at the Town Garage; assist with a motor vehicle accident in New Marlborough; complaint on Pixley Road about a log truck that almost caused an accident; two false alarms on Wellman Road; false alarm at Mount Hunger Estates; medical call on Main Road; 911 call from a child left home alone; lockout on Main Road; cows in the road on Blue Hill Road; assist with a fire; assist for Pixley Road resident with a complaint about a bounced check from the sale of a car; assist with a tour bus stuck crossways in the intersection on Chestnut Hill Road; false alarm on Brett Road; disabled motor vehicle on Pixley Road.

Lake Garfield Boat Ramp

Monterey resident Rodney Palmer met with the Select Board on February 26th and submitted a proposal for an alternate location for the public boat ramp on Lake Garfield. The current location of the boat ramp on the south side of the Town Beach makes the ramp unusable during the months of June, July, August, and the beginning of September due to the its proximity to swimmers.

In consideration of local sportsmen the State of Massachusetts has encouraged

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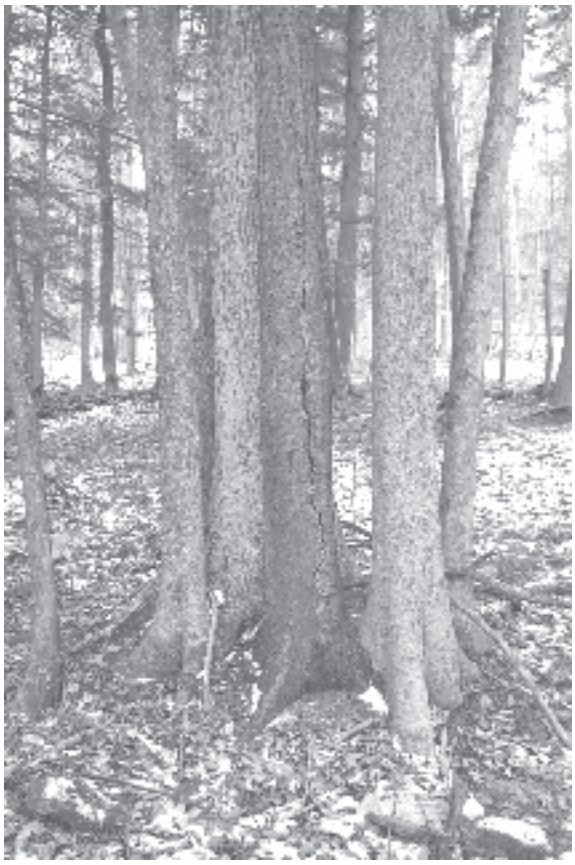
the town to find alternative locations for the public boat ramp. Due to high property values around Lake Garfield this has been very difficult. Mr. Palmer has conceived a design and a location just north of the Town Beach, just past the small field near the beach and near the culverts and the riprap portion of the beach. There is also a space suitable for parking off of Tyringham Road. The Select Board will have Town Counsel research the deed to see who the owns the property. It is unclear if the property belongs to the Amidon family or if it may be state land.

This and That

The Select Board met with Town Counsel Jerome Scully from Hannon Lerner law firm at the February 26th meeting. Mr. Scully is retiring as of July 1, 2007, and he introduced his replacement, Jeremiah Pollard, to the Select Board. Mr. Pollard is an attorney whose focus has been municipal law for the past five years. He has joined the firm of Hannon Lerner, whose business is 50 percent municipal clients.

Since the Board had Town Counsel in their clutches they took the opportunity to ask him a couple of questions. The first was whose responsibility it is to take minutes at the annual Town Meeting and how those minutes would ever be approved. Secondly, what is the status of the Board's request to research Edith Wilson's will? Mr. Scully is trying to decide how much time researching the will would take and if he can do it under his current retainer or if there will be additional costs. Mr. Scully said that he would get back to the Select Board about these matters.



Susan Sellew

At this time of year much of the time at the Select Board meetings is spent on budget requests for the warrant for the annual Town Meeting in May. During the February 26th meeting the Board met for two hours with Finance Committee Chair Debra Mielke and Town Accountant Barbara Gauthier. Ms. Mielke and Ms. Gauthier reviewed the budget requests with the Select Board. Details will be forthcoming, but at this point suffice to say that all parties are hard at work on the budget.

At the February 12th meeting the Select Board discussed its meeting times in an effort to ascertain if the Monday morning time frame is discouraging people from running for the Select Board. Jon Sylbert said that during the caucuses and the open meeting on February 24th he would do an informal survey to see if the meeting time was preventing anyone from running for the Board. Michael Storch asserted that the Board meets more frequently than it needs to and thought meeting every other week would be sufficient. Storch also noted that Monterey is the only town in the county that meets in the morning or during the day. Wayne Burkhart said that he was not sure if moving the meetings to the evening hours would increase participation or discourage it. The Select Board has convened meetings at night that have been largely unattended.

— Maggie Leonard

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Monterey School Community Conversation

The Planning Board held a joint meeting with the Select Board on Tuesday, February 13, at 7 p.m. at Town Hall and invited the public to discuss the future of the Monterey Kindergarten. Approximately twenty people, many of whom have young children eligible for the kindergarten, attended the meeting. The school is under discussion because the Southern Berkshire Regional School District (SBRSD) has consulted with the Building Commissioner and determined that the school building is in need of approximately $400,000 in maintenance and repairs. Plus, this year there are only six children attending the kindergarten, which the school district considers a low enrollment.

The meeting was opened by Planning Board chair Maggie Leonard (full disclosure: me), who distributed a handout with a brief description of the work that the Planning Board is engaged in with regards to Monterey's Master Plan. The discussion began with the question "How many families here are considering sending children to the Monterey kindergarten?" From the seven affirmative answers given, and the information that those folks had about other families, it was determined that at least ten families in Monterey intend to send children to the kindergarten in the next two years. Early on in the meeting it was evident that those attending were squarely in the camp of keeping the school in Monterey.

From that point questions were posed such as, "Why has the school district neglected the school building in Monterey for so long that it needs these extensive repairs?" Monterey resident Mickey Jervas asked, "What has the expenditure been for the building in previous school budgets?" To which Select Board member Jon Sylbert responded, "For the past five years $1800.00 has been budgeted for the Monterey Kindergarten." The attendees were amazed at the small amount budgeted for the maintenance and repair of the building year after year. Jervas replied, "I spend more than that on my house each year, and it's not a school." Jacob Krans, parent of a potential kindergartener, asked if any state or federal funds were available for school repairs, or if there were any endowed funds. No one had an answer for that question. Michael Saporito, a local parent who is also a professional school administrator, asked if the repairs were mandated by the Department of Education or recommended by the Southern Berkshire Regional School District. Sylbert responded that he believed that they were recommended by the school district. Longtime Monterey resident Dick Tyron said, "If we really want a school in Monterey and we need money for repairs, why don't we just put an amount on the warrant and vote it up or down in May?"

That suggestion elicited an important question: "What should our community be doing to support the Monterey school?" The feeling at the meeting was that the school in Monterey provides an important sense of place and community for the children of Monterey. It was also agreed that safety is the priority, followed by the functionality and aesthetics of the building. Select Board member Michael Storch assured everyone that the building is safe for children. Parents Mari Enoch and Mary Makuc asked about the possibility of doing some renovations before the next school year begins. Makuc observed that it is harder to convince out-of-town parents to "choice-in" to the kindergarten for their children when it is so rundown. Both Enoch and Makuc agreed that the teacher, Susan Andersen, has a great program for the children that can draw students from outside Monterey. One local mom, Franny Huberman, said that her child asked that she attend the meeting to support the school.

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Although a formal vote was not taken, it was agreed to form a focus group to research prioritizing the repairs and renovations to the school building, and to ask the Building Commissioner what needs immediate attention. It was also agreed to consult with Susan Andersen to see what improvements she would like to see made at the school.

Monterey's School Committee representative Deborah Mielke stated that the school district is not "against the school or threatening to close it." She said that the district is faced with the reality of declining population and that one of the options under consideration is consolidating the outlying schools in the district. Mielke stated that the school complex in Sheffield, which consists of Mount Everett High School and Undermountain Elementary School, was built for 1500 students and now there are 750. Meeting attendees asked that the Select Board compose a letter to be read at the next School Committee meeting to go on the record stating that Monterey would like to retain its kindergarten and request funds for repairs. Select Board member Jon Sylbert attended the SBRSD School Committee meeting on February 15th and read a letter stating exactly that.

— Maggie Leonard

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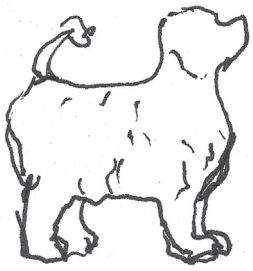
Planning Board News

The Planning Board will hold a public hearing on Thursday, March 22, at 7 p.m. at the Town Hall to propose adding common driveway regulations to the Monterey Zoning Bylaws. Common driveways are private roadways that provide access to more than one lot, but all the lots served by the common driveway also must have road frontage on an approved town road or an approved subdivision road. Initially the Planning Board consulted with Highway Superintendent Maynard Forbes, who suggested a tiered system of specifications for common driveways that would have different levels of construction with the amount of building lots served. There are road specifications for common driveways that serve two to four building lots, another set of construction standards for common driveways that serve five to eight lots, and common driveways that serve nine or more lots must be designed in accordance with Monterey Subdivision Control standards.

Also under consideration at the hearing will be a proposal to amend Section VII. General Regulations, Section VII.C. Non-municipal Educational or Religious Use section of the Zoning Bylaws. This section specifies that a 200-ft. setback or buffer zone surrounding the property be kept undeveloped with the exception of entrance and exit roadways. Apparently this language sends Gould Farm to the Zoning Board of Appeals for a variance each time they want to do construction. The amended wording of the bylaw would relieve this problem and can be reviewed at Town Hall.

The Select Board has alerted the Planning Board that the bylaw regulating wireless telecommunications in Monterey is inadequate. The Planning Board created the Wireless Telecommunications bylaw in 1998 and, after looking at several studies on optimal transmission areas, decided to make Mount Wilcox the designated area for a possible tower location. The board reasoned that it was one of the highest points in town, thus an excellent site for covering most of the town, and there was already an access road to the site. Unfortunately, it is also state land and, according to local high-speed Internet entrepreneur WiSpring, unavailable for commercial use.

— Maggie Leonard, Chair,
Monterey Planning Board



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Democrats Caucus March 10

All registered Democrats in Monterey are invited and encouraged to attend a caucus on Saturday, March 10, at 10 a.m. in the Meetinghouse basement. The purpose of this caucus will be to select and endorse candidates to run for town offices. Candidates will be chosen for Board of Appeals, Board of Assessors, Board of Health, Cemetery Committee, Constable, Finance Committee, Library Trustees (2 positions), Moderator, Park Commission (2 positions), Planning Board (3 positions), Select Board, Tax Collector, Treasurer, and Tree Warden.

Our nominating committee will be offering candidates for these positions and nominations from the floor will be accepted as well. Anyone nominated from the floor must either be present or have agreed to the candidacy in writing.

Our goal will be to endorse the strongest possible candidates to fill the eighteen positions that will be on the May 5th ballot. To achieve this goal it will be essential that we have the broadest participation possible by Democrats in choosing those who will administer our town. For more information contact Muriel Lazzarini at 528-5796 or malazz@map.com.

March Community Dinner

The Valentine's Day blizzard canceled the February potluck dinner along with many other activities. We hope everyone got the message about the cancellation; anytime you're in doubt, please call the church at 528-5850.

The next Monterey community potluck dinner will be on March 7th at 6 p.m. in the Meetinghouse basement. The Chord Sharks, the award-winning barbershop quartet that was on tap for February 14th, has graciously agreed to be rescheduled for March 7th. They are members of the Barbershop Harmony Society and its Pittsfield chapter, known as the Berkshire Hillsmen.

The Monterey Coffee Club has voted to provide a ham for this dinner. Thanks to them and to Steve Pullen, who will be doing the roasting.

Everyone is welcome, please bring a dish to share with a serving utensil and a plate and silverware for yourself.

There has been some discussion about continuing the potluck dinners through the summer, year-round. We will be discussing this at the March dinner and beyond. Please bring your thoughts on this idea.

— Kyle Pierce

Hunger Mountain Boys Concert March 31

On March 31st the Monterey Cultural Council will present a free concert at 8:00 p.m. at the Monterey Meetinghouse featuring the local Berkshire band The Hunger Mountain Boys. The band features Kip Beacco (mandolin, guitar, fiddle, and vocals), Teddy Webber (guitar, steel guitar, and vocals), and Matt Downing (string bass). Beacco and Downing are Monterey residents (yes, that's OUR Hunger Mountain) and Webber lives nearby in New York State.

Performing since 2003, the band is familiar to local music fans who may have seen them at Club Helsinki, the Mahaiwe Performing Arts Center, Café Lena, the Iron Horse, Calvin Theater, or the Guthrie Center, or heard them on local radio shows including WAMC's *Performance Place* and *Dancing on the Air*. In 2003 they won first place in the *Mountain Stage* New Song Festival songwriting contest on NPR for their song "Nashville Don't Touch my Country Music," and some of their original work is featured in the 2003 Jimmy Martin documentary *King of Bluegrass*. They have released three CDs and have toured nationally and internationally, sharing the stage with legendary performers such as Taj Mahal, Del McCoury, Tim O'Brien, Iris Dement, Doc Watson, Ralph Stanley, and the Clinch Mountain Boys, among others.

Support from the Town of Monterey and the Massachusetts Cultural Council make Monterey Cultural Council events like this possible, and we thank them. We also thank the Monterey United Church of Christ for their open-hearted generosity in consistently sharing their space for our events.

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Rabies Clinic

A Rabies Clinic for dogs and cats will be held on Saturday, March 10, 2007, from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m. at the Monterey Fire Station. The cost is $10.00 per shot. Dog licenses will also be available at that time.

Drama Workshop for Monterey Children

The Monterey Cultural Council is pleased to support a drama workshop series for Monterey children between the ages of 9 and 14. The workshops, led by Meredyth Babcock of Marmalade Productions, will begin on Friday, April 6. The group will meet in the basement of the Monterey Meetinghouse on Fridays from 4 to 5:30 p.m. for six sessions. The final workshop will include a sharing that will be open to the public. The cost will be minimal—only $20 per child, with siblings paying $10. Financial aid is available. If you are interested please call Franny Huberman by March 20th at 528-5414 to register or for more information.

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Peggy Reves

Jazz Night: (l–r) Mark Caldwell, Allan Dean, and Billy Barkin.

Sign-Ups for Cal Ripken Baseball League

The 2007 Cal Ripken Baseball League is now organizing. Boys and girls ages 5 to 12 (those not turning 13 before May 1, 2007) may sign up. All players are welcome, from beginners to all-stars. Everybody learns and plays.

There will be a local 15-to-20-game season from mid-April through June, plus an optional postseason tournament and summer baseball events. This is an excellent baseball experience emphasizing fun, friendship, hitting, pitching, action, and team spirit.

Home games and practices are at beautiful Greene Park in the center of Monterey off Route 23. The league is for children from Monterey, Sandisfield, Great Barrington, Otis, Blandford, Becket, New Marlborough, Sheffield, Egremont, Alford, Mount Washington, and surrounding areas. Parents are urged to get involved. There will be activities two to three times per week for players aged 8 and up, one time per week for those 5 to 7 (with tennis balls). There is no mandatory attendance for practice or games, but players should plan to attend at least 50 percent of the events.

The cost for the season is $35 per player or maximum $50 per family, which covers uniforms, insurance, equipment, etc.

To sign up, send player's name, birth date, parents' names, phone number, email address, and mailing address to: Jim Edelman, President, S. Berkshire Cal Ripken League, PO Box 11, Monterey, MA 01245; or email Cljvedelman@aol.com or call 413-528-0006.

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From the Meetinghouse . . .

Here's a modern day parable: Biosphere 2 first opened in 1991 as a massive closed system that would last for one hundred years of testing nature, technology, and human endurance. It is the world's largest experimental site and was given the mission name "Biosphere 2" in deference to the original and much larger biosphere, the Earth itself. It occupies 3.15 acres in Oracle, Arizona, and features an ocean complete with reefs and lagoons and beaches with about three hundred types of sea creatures, an equatorial rainforest, a desert, a savannah, a marsh, and a three-chambered forest, each enclosed in its own biome. So thorough was the planning that all elements apparently necessary to life were accounted for: glass ceilings allowed for sun to shine through; a combination of well-balanced "natural" phenomena and human technology allowed for rain in due season; there was a period in the early 90s during the two-year stay of the first biospherians when oxygen levels fell, which threatened human respiration; it was followed by a fall in carbon dioxide that limited plant productivity, but eventually equilibrium was restored. Yet there was one annual occurrence that puzzled the biospherians: the fruit trees of all climates, which grew and flowered and put forth fruit as expected, then dropped the fruit before it was ripe, so that yet young fruit carpeted the biome floors.

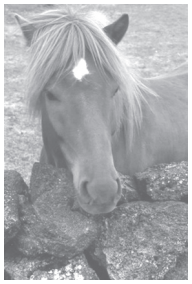
The question, of course, was, why?

The answer, as discovered a couple years later, was the lack of wind, the one natural element missing from Biome 2. Wind strengthens the branches of trees so they can manage to carry the fruit that they are made to bear. The resistance that wind provides challenges the trees so they can do what they are intended to do but are unable to do if the conditions are too easy. What makes for a perfect environment for fruit trees is not easy living but the right amount of hardship.

So it is with us, I think. I am writing this during Lent, the six-week season prior to Easter when the church would have us walk with Christ to Jerusalem, to Golgotha, eventually to the cross. It is often seen as a morbid time, when Christians glorify in our Lord's bloody death. Mel Gibson's film of a few years ago, *The Passion of the Christ,* certainly helped feed this perception, a film that I didn't see but came to understand equated Jesus' unspeakable suffering with his glory. But the Gospel isn't about finding reason to glorify in suffering, a notion that would lead us to sadism—torturing others as if this would lead to their glory—or masochism, so torturing ourselves: a notion that would have us admire history's greatest perpetrators of suffering as if they had been doing God's will and would have us worshipping at such places as Auschwitz or Darfur. No, the Gospel isn't such a celebration of violence and death, just as the cross isn't a sign of God's desire for blood sacrifice. Instead, the Gospel is the good news of God that that God meets human violence with peace, that God heals fractured relationships with forgiveness, that God brings an end to cycles of vengeance with acts of love, that God undoes death itself with life abundant and universal. And the cross, paradoxically, is the place of this revelation: a place where our human compulsion to violence and our human confessing in the power of blood sacrifice to save and our human rituals of scapegoating an Other for the sake of ourselves, all meet their end in God who is Love.

Yet to keep faith in such good news is itself something of a hardship. We are offered empirical evidence every day that this "Gospel" is folly, as violence seems victorious and fear seems in control and death seems to dominate as all-powerful. Just so, to keep faith in such good news amidst a world of tumult is itself a hardship, a cross to bear. And here is the purpose of Lent: not to revel in shows of violence or to glory in the spilled blood of the innocent, but to face these "realities" knowing that we might choose to be free of them. Such freedom, of course, takes great strength of faith, and for such strength we must endure some resistance, lest we be as trees that never bear forth our fruit. Just so, here is the purpose of Lent: that by its resistance we might come increasingly, year after year, to be strong of faith in ourselves and one another by the strength and faithfulness of the Holy Spirit, and to be encouraged by the integrity and peace of Christ, which is to be as God creates us to be—bearers of good fruit, sweet and sustaining, for the sake of all life.

— Elizabeth Goodman



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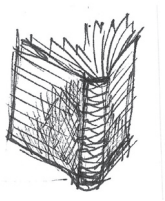

Monterey Library Recent Acquisitions

DVDs
Babel
Eye of the Leopard
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A Good Year
Flyboys
The Guardian
Hunt for Zarqawi
The Illusionist
One Night with the King
Unhitched
Flicka
Marie Antoinette
Flags of Our Fathers

New Fiction
Bastard of Istanbul, Elif Shafak
Travels in the Scriptorium, Paul Auster
The Cat Who Had 60 Whiskers, Lillian Jackson Braun
Dust, Martha Grimes
Plum Lovin, Janet Evanovich
Sacred Games, Vikram Chandra
Skylark Farm, Antonia Arslan
Bad Blood, Linda Fairstein
Hannibal Rising, Thomas Harris
Skylight Confessions, Alice Hoffman
Vicious Circle, Robert Littell

Nonfiction
About Alice, Calvin Trillin
Knitting in No Time, Melody Griffiths
Vaccine: The Controversial Story of Medicine's Greatest Lifesaver, Athur Allen
Look Homeward, America, Bill Kauffman

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Staged Reading of *Love Letters* in Otis

The Otis Cultural Council will presents *Love Letters* by A. R. Gurney (rights pending), at Farmington River Elementary School, 555 N. Main Rd. (Rte. 8), Otis, on Saturday, March 31, at 7 p.m. *and* on Sunday, April 1, at 2 p.m. Catherine Taylor-Williams of Shakespeare & Company will direct the staged reading, featuring Diane Prusha and Miles Herter. Tickets are $10 for adults (14 and over). A silent auction will be held and refreshments will be available. For information, call 413-269-0220.

Community Center News

As I was going about my work today, hoping for a bit of inspiration to help with the writing of this month's *Monterey News* article, the chorus of a Pete Seeger song drifted through my mind: "'Cause that's what life is all about: to arrange and rearrange and rearrange." I guess this could also be the refrain for any long-term town project of this nature.

The Wilson McLaughlin House Committee realizes that the Monterey Community Center might take one of several different forms, depending on the outcome of the town's petition to the Probate Court (see the January and February issues of the *Monterey News* for details). So while we await the decisions about the town's options for Edith Wilson's land and house, the Wilson McLaughlin House Committee is planning ahead for the differing eventualities (as best we can). There is much research to do: funding sources, environmentally desirable building features, recycled materials, renewable energy technology, etc. We are having a busy winter.

— Susan Sellew

David's Tipi
by Eileen Lawlor

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I take three scruffed boys
to Phoenix Park,
so we lurch up Parnell Street
on the top of the bus

rain streams down the windows
and steams them
closeting us in a glaring howdah
with a fringe of advertisements
and a moment's silence as we creak
and sway on our way
I write your name in drops
where they cannot see it
and watch the dark red brick of the houses
flow like blood through the glistening letters
and then we alight and are racing under the great dripping trees
in the pelting weather
holding our jackets over our heads
past the fruit-stand covered with a rain-spangled
plastic sheet and a wet pensive horse
past the dark ducks swimming on a sudden slice of light
we go from one building to another in shrieking spurts
over the black shining path
and the boys assess in their cruel staccato: the stench,
the lion and the lynx, the sad gibbons, the leprous bison,
the sodden feathers in the outdoor aviary

but I drop behind
and wait to lock eyes
with each silent and impervious beast

I want them to see
the terrible bars of my own cage.

— A. O. Howell

The Edge

Here I sit on a small orange circle
connected to the infinite collapsible table
rocking back and forth
contemplating my restlessness

I feel lost in the maze of voices
swearing and laughing uncontrollably
while watching these voices devour
nachos and pretzels dripping
with orange artificial cheese
from the snack bar

I ease drop continually
asking questions while searching for inclusion
but I receive few responses

My bagel and cream cheese are too small
to last twenty-two minutes
so my hot pink lunch bag
behaves as my trusty shield

I envision when my dreams
will become a reality
when I will not be plastered to this seat
in this horrific school
of teenagers searching for their identities

These dreams transport me from my seat
my heart from pain
and my mind from fear

I write poetry in my head
as a result of the conglomeration of
feelings, thoughts, and questions colliding in my head
as I sit here at the edge . . .
THE EDGE OF THIS TABLE.

— Elizabeth A. Bohlke

jewel in the jukebox

(for Lyzie)

he couldn't just listen an' leave it alone that
dumb butt he had to touch it like a jewel an'
he broke it my juke box next time I'll knit a
cage aroun' me an' my like a jewel juke box
an' those bad boys'll just have to listen from
down on the street shakin' their dumb little
butts next to their flashy hot rods waitin' for me
to come down but I won't come down I'll stay
inside my like a fisherman's net cage with my
jewel like juke box listenin' to my fresh beats an'
ripe tunes shakin' my beautiful butt till the street-
lights fade an' the motors dry up till those bad
boys head home with their dumb butts an' their
flashy hot rods till the milky way an' the moon
come out to shine on the face of that giant
juke box like a jewel in the way up above all
the dumb
and the beautiful

— R. Zukowski

The Masai and Me

By some miracle of the imagination, advertising, and my sore feet, I find myself involved with the famous Masai people of Tanzania and Kenya. Until now I gave them little thought except to afford them the kind of awe their myth inspires in many of us: they are handsome, proud, and tall; they have refused to be tamed or assimilated into modern systems of domestication and centralized living; their lives focus upon their cattle. This was about all I knew, and it seemed not to touch my rocky wooded hillside here in Monterey except sometimes through the pages of the *National Geographic*. I knew they liked to wear bright clothing and beaded decorations.

Then I got sore feet. A foot expert sent me downtown to look at special sneakers. The clerk was embarrassed to tell me the price and I didn't even try them on (afraid I might like them). She gave me the DVD, though, that comes free with the shoes. The cover says, "Step into a better body," and the body in the photo is that of a Masai youth. He stands tall and timeless in his bright red cloths and woven and beaded jewelry. The vast plain is below him, the brilliant blue East African sky behind his bright clothing and gleaming dark skin.

I look at the feet, wondering if he has somehow purchased a pair of these sneakers and is modeling them for the DVD box. No, he is barefoot, standing on a rocky outcropping somewhere in the Great Rift Valley. I know he is posing for the photo, but he could also be looking after his cattle, grazing down below. But

what on earth is his role in the better-body-for-Bonner campaign? Does he think his body is better then mine? When I was his age I did not have sore feet. Let's talk to him in about fifty years and see how his feet are doing.

I spin the disc. Aha! The sneakers have named themselves after the Masai people. They are Masai Barefoot Technology shoes, and if I have trouble identifying with the tall, slim, dark-skinned Masai, I now get to see other models of folks. There is the twenty-something white Caucasian couple pacing along a paved road with the Alps in the background. They are wearing Spandex and the sneakers. The female computer voice tells me, with techno-rock in the background to keep my pulse up, that I can balance and straighten up if I get these shoes. She refers to my muscular-*skeleetal* system more than once and urges me to "walk like a warrior" while I combat cellulite. My kind of war, I guess.

I get out the encyclopedia and learn that there are about a million Masai in East Africa. The men take care of the cattle and the women are the builders of houses, plastered affairs in compounds with a good thorn fence all around. The cattle are brought in at night. Little children have their two bottom front teeth knocked out in case they get tetanus and lockjaw. They can still be fed. My parents used to warn me about tetanus and lockjaw but I had shoes, which I particularly had to keep on around barnyards. It was about rusty nails and manure piles, I thought. Maybe if the Masai children had sneakers of some sort they could keep their teeth.

In the movie, the Masai men seem to stride around in groups, carrying staves which are long and slim, just like them. The few women I can see are carrying

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big containers and the encyclopedia says they carry water, sometimes from twenty or thirty miles away!

I go to Google and learn that I can go on a safari to see hippos, rhinos, giraffes, and Masai. What a world. I listen to a brief recording of Masai music through my teeny computer speaker. It is the size of one of the ornaments the Masai youth wears on his necklace, also in his ear.

I can't get enough of him. I love the photo and am starting to feel tipsy on the sheer clarity of it, and his beauty. I know we all come from Africa; somehow he stayed and I made it all the way to Monterey. If I went back, if I were a Masai woman, I would long ago have been married to a whole age-set of men. I would have experienced female circumcision, or clitoridectomy, as a teenager. I would be able to build a hut of branches with mud, dung, and urine for plaster. I might still be walking twenty miles for water, or I might be the person whose sore feet keeps her home helping out with chores around the "kraal," or group of huts where my family lives. I might have a grandson whose photo appears on DVDs selling fancy sneakers. I might be in a chorus singing call-and-response music through laptops. I might carefully knock the teeth out of little children to save them from starvation in case their bare feet bring them lockjaw.

I look at this boy and think life certainly is a crapshoot. He got his body, his landscape, and I got mine. Amazingly, his get used to sell $300 sneakers, and this is where he and I intersect in the world. Thanks to my sore feet, I have him in my life. I am just lucky that I can have him and still forgo the shoes and the clitoridectomy.

— Bonner J. McAllester

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BTF Spring and Summer Drama Camps

Berkshire Theatre Festival is once again offering its BTF PLAYS! drama camps during spring break and summer vacation. These weeklong programs incorporate storytelling, improvisational games, movement, vocal technique, and acting skills. Students perform a classical myth or fairytale at the end of each session. BTF artists-in-residence teach the classes. These actors have recently performed at schools throughout the region in the BTF touring production, *The Three Threads of Fate*.

The BTF PLAYS! Spring Break Camp (April 16–20) is designed for students ages 8 to 12. Classes will meet from 9 a.m.–2 p.m. at the BTF campus. Tuition is $200.00.

Summer Camp sessions will be held July 9–13 (ages 11–14), July 16–20 (ages 10–12), and August 13–17 (ages 7-9), from 9:00 a.m. to noon at the BTF campus. Tuition is $175.00 per session. Partial scholarships will be made available for Hilltown full-time students, thanks to collaboration with the Becket Art Center. Preference will be given to students who have taken part in a BTF PLAYS! program during the 2006–07 school year.

Class size limited. For more information or to register by phone, contact Administrative Director of Education Allison Rachele Bayles at 413-298-5536 ext. 19.

About BTF PLAYS!

Berkshire Theatre Festival's year-round education program, BTF PLAYS!, serves area students from kindergarten through high school. At the heart of BTF PLAYS! is a passionate commitment to bring live theatre and all its inherent excitement and creativity to children in our region. Since its inception in 1984, the program has reached more than 50,000 students in underserved rural and inner city schools throughout Berkshire Country. For more information about Berkshire Theatre Festival, please visit www.berkshiretheatre.org.

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Letter from College

A National Student Think Tank

Looking back, I should have introduced the Roosevelt Institution in this college column earlier. I'm so involved now that it's almost impossible to describe the multifaceted nature of the organization and the opportunities I have received through it, not to mention the impact it has on my daily life. I got involved with Roosevelt my second week of freshmen year, and since that time I have moved into the position of policy director (or vice president), gone to conferences, met incredibly inspiring students, heard amazing ideas, and learned about some critically important issues facing our nation and the global community.

The Roosevelt Institution is a national nonprofit progressive student think tank founded shortly after the 2004 election by a group of students who were disenchanted with the election outcome, but more importantly were also disappointed in the role they, and we as students in general, are asked to play in the political arena. We are asked for our legwork on campaigns, our money, and our votes; however we are rarely asked for our ideas. College campuses, the Roosevelt founders believe, are effective student think tanks, but they haven't been efficient ones. So these dedicated individuals set out to create an organization that would provide college students with the chance to voice the ideas they develop at college every day in classes and through research projects and field work. Roosevelt is not politically affiliated: "Not right, not left, but forward" is one of our favorite mottos. Our name derives from the legacy of Theodore and Franklin Roosevelt, and of course Eleanor as well.

So what do we do exactly? Well, the organization operates on about 60 campuses nationwide, including Stanford, Louisiana State University, Yale, University of Texas, and American University to name a few. These chapters have centers that are focused on developing progressive solutions to issues such as health policy, environmental issues, international affairs, education, immigration, human rights, and economic policy. The goal is to encourage students to voice their own views on solutions to these issues, and then provide them with vehicles through which their ideas can be published. There are currently two major publications; one is the *Roosevelt Review,* a selection of carefully researched policy pieces up to fifteen pages long. The second publication, *25 Ideas,* revolves around the three Roosevelt Challenges, the newest structuring device designed to bring together our chapters' efforts. The challenges will change annually. The current ones are: "For the academic year 2006-2007, using public policy as their vehicle, the Roosevelt Institution challenges students to

1) Reduce our dependence on foreign, harmful, and unsustainable energy;

2) Build an America that works for working families;

3) Increase socio-economic diversity in higher education."

The chapters are working together to address these challenges, and the *25 Ideas* publication is actually three separate books, one for each challenge. Each will feature 25 solid papers featuring ideas addressing that particular challenge. These are less labor intensive than the longer policies showcasing student ideas on how to solve the given challenge.

Chapters are also holding events that address the challenges by bringing students together with experts in the field. I traveled in October to Yale University with several other Middlebury students to attend "A Seat at the Table" conference on increasing socioeconomic diversity in higher education. It was a one-and-a-half-day conference where speakers included keynote William Bowen, President Emeritus of the Mellon Foundation; Congressman Fattah from Pennsylvania; Anthony Mark, the president of Amherst College; and Myra Baas Smith, Director of Financial Aid Services for the College Board. The experts took our dedication and passion seriously and are providing ongoing support for our work.

The national organization, which runs out of two offices in New York and Washington, D.C., provides support to current and developing chapters. A student oversight committee, with five members, each the spokesperson for a given region of the country, is responsible for ensuring communication between chapters and the national organization, and also helps chapters collaborate on local initiatives and ideas. Two networks have been set

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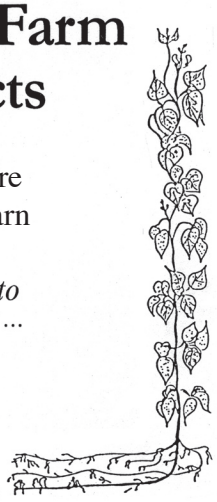

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up for aspiring members to become the public faces of the organization speaking about policy Roosevelt is developing or the message the organization is promoting. Additionally, there are other elements such as an editorial board and national positions that turn over yearly.

Every summer we have an exposition in Washington, D.C., where policies are presented to a larger audience that includes government officials. We have a comprehensive website www.rooseveltinstitution.org that showcases the latest news, links to chapters, and work that is being done. We have national conference calls for our main chapters now and for each challenge bi-weekly to keep in touch with national projects. Finally, every summer delegates from most of the chapters are hosted by the Franklin and Eleanor Institute at Hyde Park, New York, to talk about the upcoming year and new national developments, and from now on they will pick the three new challenges for the year through the democratic voting process.

Middlebury's work this year includes holding two challenge-related events. One, held the last week in February, on energy independence included two keynote speakers, a panel discussion on international development, a panel discussing current energy politics, and several other exciting events. Roosevelt's biggest event is a policy idea competition in which students present their ideas on how to reduce our dependence on foreign, harmful, and unsustainable energy

in a concise write-up; a panel of judges chooses three finalists to continue to the final round where, hopefully, a live video feed will allow judges from Stanford University and Middlebury to judge proposals from both schools and pick two winners, one from each side of the country. These students will be published in the *25 Ideas* publication for this challenge.

Our second event is for women and pay equity, and will feature keynote speaker Heidi Hartman, President of the Institute for Women's Policy and Research. We will also have a panel discussion by successful women who have balanced career and family, a policy workshop with professors and a state representative, and a deliberative dialogue to help facilitate constructive discussions on the issue and how to address it. This symposium was made possible by a grant we got from the American Association of University Women, and someone from the group will be presenting our project in a D.C. or Phoenix conference this summer. We are also planning a spring publication of our own at Middlebury and working on a new leadership for next year.

I have invested time and energy in this organization, not as much as others, but enough to know that the skills I am learning, the leadership potential I'm developing, the connections I've made, and the people I've met are shaping me daily into a more confident individual. There is power in student ideas, and to be heard and respected amongst peers and experts for the work you are trying to do is part of an experience I could barely imagine before I came to college. I am challenged in the classroom certainly, but as a person and a collaborative member of a greater body I believe it is through this organization that I am finding my own hidden aspirations and passions.

— Tarsi Dunlop

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The Bidwell Road Fox

For the past few years, we have shared our yard and property with none other than a red fox. Exactly one country mile east of the center of Monterey on Route 23, the first entrance to Bidwell Road opens to a quarter-mile unpaved loop leading to weekend and summer cottages with waterfront access to Lake Garfield shores, complete, in season, with boathouses, docks, motor boats, barking dogs, and splashing swimmers. It then continues around our little woodland before rejoining Main Road. If this seems an unlikely habitat for a family of wily foxes, there is a den under an abandoned boathouse at the foot of a steep slope leading down to the water's edge.

Almost every morning, particularly after a late winter snow flurry, there are fresh tracks, coming down from Chestnut Hill, where the rising sun first peeks through the tree line, down toward the lake. A red fox will hunt in a five square-mile area. The species, one of the widest spread terrestrial carnivores, inhabits most of North America, as well as Eurasia and Australia. However it is rare to see red foxes out in broad daylight, even though they are diurnal, because in areas of extensive human interference such as our own, their activity tends to be mainly nocturnal. They are attracted to household waste, seed under a bird feeder, roadkill, and almost any other small game they can catch.

On a sunny day, our fox hangs out under a brush pile at the foot of a hill not fifty yards from our house, and sometimes curls up to sleep in a pile of leaves in plain view of our kitchen window. One spring morning I heard a commotion from our neighbor's tennis court and went over to find a young fox caught behind a chain link fence, separated from its mother until she ran to the open gate and they were reunited. Young foxes are called kits, like kittens, and foxes are often referred to as catlike canids; they have vertical slit eye pupils like a cat and are also quite adept at climbing trees to get a better view of their

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surroundings or to elude pesky barking dogs in their neighborhood.

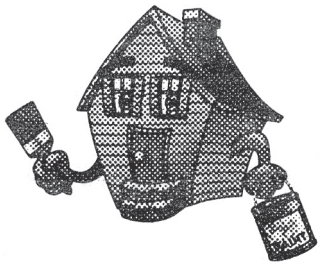
The fox has a rich heritage in folklore and mythology, with common sayings such as "crazy like a fox" or "a fox in the henhouse," as well as the parable of "The Fox And Grapes." It also has a human name—Reynard—and if humans can have relationships or identify with wildlife, the fox is a likely association. In Ernest Thompson Seton's classic *Wild Animals I Have Known* (1898), one chapter is entitled "The Springfield Fox." So I would steal a page from his work by saying that when the sunset of the last day of winter fades into the distance across Lake Garfield, and we hear the hoarse bark of a vixen to her kits, to come out of their den, it soon will be the night of the Bidwell Road fox!

— George Emmons

Upon My Word!

Diaper. The city of Ypres [pronounced *eee-pre*] is in Belgium. I bicycled there the summer I was twelve and saw an unforgettable exhibition of pictures of the horrors of World War I. Belgium had always been famous for its fabrics. After that war, when material was imported from Belgium, the label often read '*d'Ypres,*' which was mispronounced "dwipers" and ended up becoming "diapers."

— A. O. Howell



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Sam Roberts

National Single-Payer Universal Health Care Event

Health care is a human right. Everyone deserves to be covered and not exploited by wasteful and profit-making health insurance and pharmaceutical industries. *"Of all forms of inequality, injustice in health care is the most shocking and inhumane."* —Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

This is the essential message of the upcoming event from 7–9:30 p.m. on Wednesday, April 4, 2007 (Martin Luther King, Jr., Memorial Day), at the Lenox Community Center, 65 Walker Street, Lenox, Massachusetts.

On that day the sponsor of this event, Healthcare-NOW!, will hold events across the nation to honor Dr. King's commitment to and passion for a National Health Care System for all that does not exploit human beings, by advocating for National Single-Payer Universal Health Care.

The keynote speaker will be Michael Kaplan, MD, Family Physician in private practice for more than twenty years in Lee. He is a long-time member of Physicians for a National Health Program and one of the four hundred signers of the original *New England Journal of Medicine* article that appeared in January 1989. He is a community faculty member at UMass Medical School and Tufts University School of Medicine; Dr. Kaplan is also Board Certified in Family Medicine and Geriatrics.

The film *One Care Now* from California's OneCareNow.org will be shown, advocating for single-payer publicly funded health care and explaining how it can work.

The Cosponsors are Berkshire MassCare, a chapter of the grass-roots state-wide organization MassCare, whose goal is to have a single-payer health care system funded by the state, and Valley Massage Therapy.

For more information on the event, call 518-672-4129 or the Lenox Community Center, 413-637-5530.

Bluesman Scott Ainslie at Club Helsinki to Benefit WBCR

WBCR-LP and Club Helsinki present Scott Ainslie in the next Acoustic Brunch concert to benefit the community radio station, on Sunday, March 18, at 12:30 pm.

Combining thirty years of scholarship with almost forty years of playing guitar, Ainslie presents a beguiling mix of the African and American roots of the blues, in story and song. He has three solo CDs of traditional and contemporary blues, and is the author of *Robert Johnson/At the Crossroads* (1992). In late 2004, he produced a fourth CD, this time of original songs, *The Feral Crow.* The songs reflect his awareness of and passion for social and political justice.

Tickets are $15.00, $12.00 for WBCR members and $8.00 for kids under 12. Reservations are suggested; call 413 528-3394.

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Ian McAlister Graduates from AF Avionics School

On February 8, Airman 1st Class Ian O. McAlister of the 104th Fighter Wing Air National Guard graduated from Sheppard Air Force Base Avionics Technical School. He was the first Airman ever to achieve 100 percent on all seven blocks of the eighteen-week course on the F-15 Eagle fighter aircraft avionics. In this course, McAlister learned how to repair, install, and calibrate electronic systems for the F-15. Since 2003, more than four hundred students have graduated, with an average grade of 87 percent.

At graduation, Ian received several awards including:

Flight Chief's Award-365th Training Squadron Fighter Avionics (for scoring 100 percent on more than half the exams);

Academic ACE Award (for scoring 100 percent on *all* the exams);

AETC Commander's Award (for leadership, academics, character).

According to Chief MSgt Stephen A. Murphy of the 104th, "The avionics career field is perhaps the most academically challenging enlisted career field in the United States Air Force today."

For the next two to three months, Airman McAlister will be working fulltime at the Barnes Air National Guard Base in Westfield, Massachusetts for his on-the-job training. Some of those weeks will be spent at Otis Air Base on Cape Cod to work directly with the F-15 aircraft.

Come September, McAlister will resume his studies toward an electrical engineering degree. He had completed three years at Simon's Rock College of Bard before departing June 6th for Air Force Basic Training, where he graduated as an Honor Graduate and an Expert Marksman.

Ian McAlister, 20, is the son of Stephen and Rosemary McAlister of Monterey and the oldest of their five children.

Highland Communities Initiative Grants for Community Preservation

Where do you turn for funds to save an historic mill, form an agricultural commission, or rewrite your town's zoning bylaws? For the past seven years, people concerned about protecting the rural character and quality of life in their western Massachusetts communities have sought help from the Highland Communities Initiative (HCI). HCI recently announced that its Small Grants Program awarded over $300,000 in the past six years to local towns and groups working on community preservation projects across the region. The Small Grants Program helps turn passion for the highlands region into action.

Launched in 2000 by The Trustees of Reservations, the nation's oldest regional land conservation trust, HCI and its Small Grants program provide local towns and organizations with tools and support to preserve treasured parts of their communities. According to HCI Director, Wendy Sweetser, "We recognize the passion and dedication that people in the Highlands have for preserving the character of their communities, and we want to help them realize their goals. "Often, what is needed

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most is some seed funding to get projects off the ground. Since small rural towns in the Highlands don't typically have the capacity to tap other sources of funding, we designed our Small Grants Program to be both flexible and relatively simple to access."

Dave Pierce is the type of dedicated person HCI envisioned when starting the Small Grants Program. Fearing that the magnificent arching stone railway bridges, landmarks in Chester and Middlefield since 1840, were in danger of falling into permanent disrepair, Dave applied his knowledge and enthusiasm for railroad history and construction to designing a preservation plan for the bridges. What he lacked was funding. With a Highland Communities Initiative small grant, Dave and his fellow supporters were able to officially incorporate their organization, The Friends of the Keystone Arch Bridges. Additional grants from HCI allowed the group to document the Arches for the Library of Congress, produce a film about the structures' history, and create brochures publicizing their value as a recreational and historical attraction. According to Pierce, HCI's help has made preservation of the Arches, "an ongoing concern" in the community. He hopes to soon obtain National Historic Landmark status for the arched bridges, which will help ensure that they remain part of the Highlands landscape for many years to come.

In total, 81 grants from HCI have been awarded to towns and organizations serving the 38-town Highlands region since 2000. The grants have been used for a variety of different and innovative purposes, but they all further HCI's goal of promoting community preservation and land conservation in the extraordinary Highlands region of western Massachusetts. Some notable efforts that HCI grants have made possible include:

• Sixteen towns working on updating master plans, zoning bylaws, and subdivision regulations with the help of a small grant;

• Twelve towns creating or updating an Open Space and Recreation Plan;

• The Town of Plainfield acquiring an historic mill site;

• Supporting the development of the Hilltown Farmer's Market and helping towns establish Agricultural Commissions;

• Enabling the towns of Worthington, Blandford, and Heath to conduct historic building and park inventories;

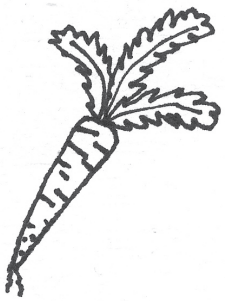
• Piloting a historic barn rehabilitation and assessment program in the Highlands.

Educational projects funded by HCI grants can be heard on the WFCR radio program "Field Notes," and seen on bookshelves in the Massachusetts Woodlands Institute's publication *Profiles of Working Woodlands*. "HCI makes it possible for small towns to be able to do what they couldn't otherwise do," said Lea Ann Thompson, of the Blandford Historical Society.

Funding for the Small Grants Program is limited and is redistributed from a larger grant that The Trustees of Reservations receives to support the Highland Communities Initiative. HCI's small grants of up to $5,000 have leveraged millions of dollars in additional funds from government agencies and foundations for Highland towns and organizations. Combined with other local financial tools, such as the Community Preservation Act, HCI is working to make sure that Highland towns have an opportunity to build a strong foundation for protecting what means most to them.

More information on the Small Grants Program, including application criteria, procedures, and project eligibility, can be found on the HCI website, http://www.highlandcommunities.org.

A program of The Trustees of Reservations, the Highland Communities Initiative is a group of neighbors and volunteers working to enhance the quality of life and rural character of the Highlands region of western Massachusetts. The Highlands region consists of 38 towns between the Connecticut River valley and the Housatonic River valley, from the Vermont to the Connecticut borders.



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Susan Sellew

Perfect Game by Jason Duryea

On February 4 Jason Duryea bowled a 300 game at Mount Greylock Bowl in North Adams in the Berkshire County Youth Tournament. This perfect game was the first thrown in Mount Greylock by a youth in forty-six years. It is also the first 300 game thrown in this youth tournament. Jason bowls out of the Cove Bowling Lanes. He bowls in three leagues, the Junior League, the Cove Traveling Team, and the High School Bowling Club for Monument Mountain. Jason, son of Anna and Dale Duryea, has been bowling for 13 years, since he was 18 months old.

CHP Family Network Playgroups

New Marlborough Library Story Hour, Wednesdays, 10 – 11:30 a.m.

Otis Playgroup, Otis Town Hall, Fridays, 10 a.m.– noon.

Family Center Playgroup, Great Barrington Family Center, Tuesdays, 9:30 – 11:30 a.m.

Sandisfield Playgroup at Sandisfield Community Center, Tuesdays, 9:30 – 11:30 a.m.

For more playgroups and information call 528-0721.

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P.O. Box 9, 01245

We Need a Cell Tower

To the Editor:

We would like to urge you to print articles about the need for a cell tower in our beloved town.

There have been reports of avoidable tragedy at a nearby New York town: due to a lack of cell phone communication, a man froze to death while his wife tried in vain to reach 911 on a cell phone.

It is time to remedy this situation.

— The Schreibers

Berkshire911Truth Events

On Monday, March 5, and again on Monday, March 19, Berkshire911Truth will host meetings to educate and foster community building and political action. By exposing and bringing to justice those who were truly behind the crimes of 9/11, the root cause of terrorism, war, and growing class inequality will be eliminated. Both meetings will be at 7:00 p.m. at the Quaker Meeting House, 280 State Road (Route 23), Great Barrington.

On Sunday, March 11, Berkshire911 Truth will present a free movie at Card Lake Inn, Main Street, West Stockbridge. There will be refreshments, discussion, and DVDs to take home. Learn the difference between building collapse due to fire and intentional explosive detonations. For information email info@berkshire911truth.org or call, 413-232-7888.

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Calendar

Every Monday (except holidays): Select Board meeting, 8:30 a.m., Town Offices.

Saturday, March 3: Monterey Republican Caucus, 1:30 p.m., Meetinghouse basement.

Wednesday, March 7: Community Potluck Dinner, 6 p.m., Meetinghouse basement. Program by Chord Sharks, award-winning barbershop quartet. See p. 8.

Thursday, March 8: Free blood pressure clinic, 2–3 p.m., Town Offices, administered by Visiting Nurses Assoc.

Saturday, March 10:

Monterey Democratic Caucus, 10 a.m., Meetinghouse basement. See p. 8.

Rabies Clinic for dogs and cats, 1–3 p.m., Monterey Fire Station. $10 per shot, dog licenses available.

Thursday, March 15: Chapter 91 and Wetlands Presentation by DEP and Conservation Commission, 7 p.m., Town Hall Meeting Room.

Tuesday, March 20: Free health screening, Community Health program, 10 a.m., Town Hall Meeting Room.

Thursday, March 22: Monterey Planning Board public hearing on adding common driveway regulations to Monterey Zoning Bylaws, 7 p.m., Town Hall, see p. 7.

Saturday, March 24: Square and contra dancing, 8:30–11:30 p.m., Sheffield Grange, Rt. 7, Sheffield. Music by Mountain Laurel. Caller David Kaynor. All dances are taught; beginners and children are welcome. Adults $6, children $3. Information 528-9385.

Saturday, March 31:

Hunger Mountain Boys concert, 8 p.m., Monterey Meetinghouse. Free, sponsored by Monterey Cultural Council. See p. 8.

Staged reading of *Love Letters* by A. R. Gurney, 7 p.m., Farmington River Elementary School, 555 N. Main Rd. (Rte. 8), Otis. $10, sponsored by Otis Cultural Council. For information, call 413-269-0220. Repeated **Sunday, April 1,** at 2 p.m. See p. 11.

Wednesday, April 4: National Single-Payer Universal Health Care Event, 7 p.m., Lenox Community Center, 65 Walker Street, Lenox. See p. 19.

Friday, April 6: First session of six-session drama workshop for Monterey children, ages 9–14, 4–5:30 p.m., Meetinghouse basement. Led by Meredyth Babcock of Marmalade Productions. Notify Franny Huberman, 528-5414, of interest by **March 20.** See p. 9.

Contributors

We thank the following folks for their recent contributions. Readers like you make it possible for us to continue publishing. We know you receive requests from many worthy organizations for financial help and are grateful that you include the *Monterey News* in your giving.

Sharon Wiles
The Klingenstein Fund
Nicky Hearon & Jason Brown

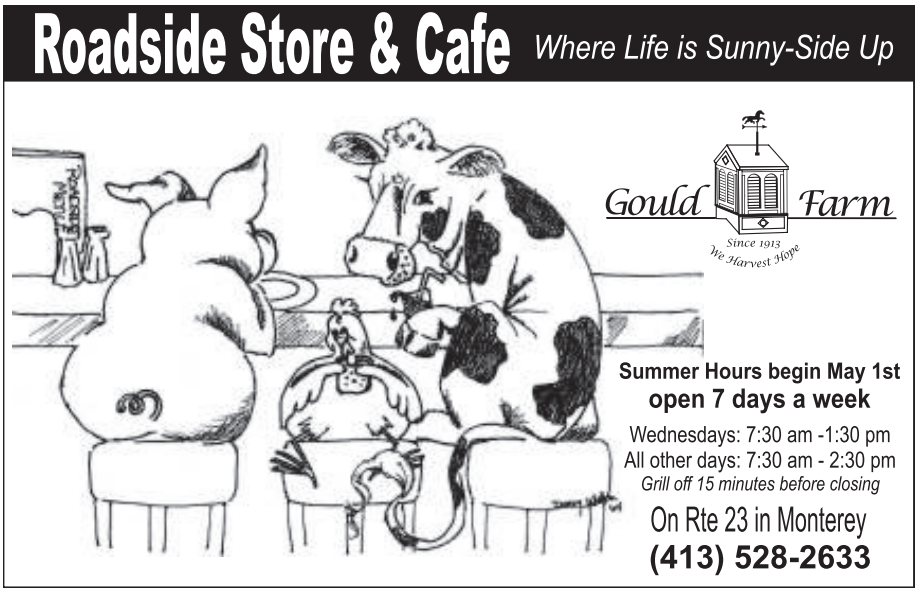
The Observer

January 26–February 25

High temp. (2/21)	41°
Low temp. (1/26)	-7°
Avg. high temp.	23.4°
Avg. low temp.	5.8°
Avg. temp.	14.6°
(Avg, temp. same period 2006	25.7°)
Total melted precipitation	3.27 in.
Snow and sleet	24.7 in.
Precipitation occurred on 17 days.	
Season snowfall total	36 in.

Transfer Station Winter Hours

Sunday	10 a.m.–4:30 p.m.
Wednesday	8 a.m.–1 p.m.
Saturday	8 a.m.–1 p.m.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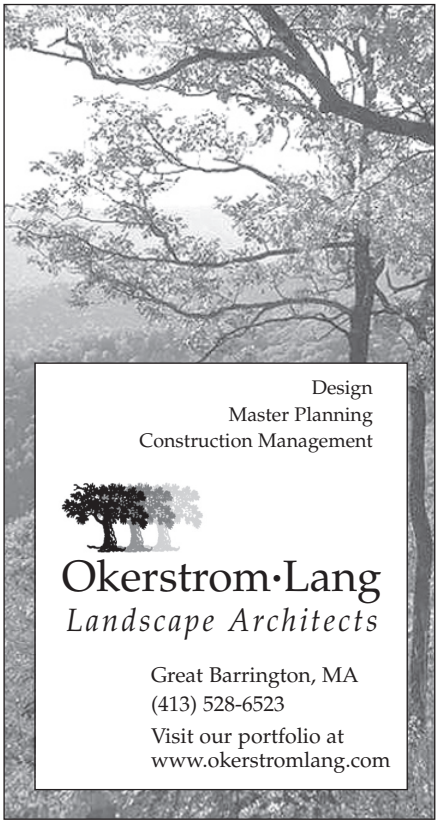

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Our editorial address is *Monterey News*, P. O. Box 9, Monterey, MA, 01245. We invite signed letters, articles, drawings, poetry, and photographs from readers. Please send submissions (e-mail or computer disk if possible) by the 20th of the month before publication, addressed to the Editor. Send any change of address, or initial request to receive the *News* by mail (free) to same address. We will set up an ad for your Monterey-based business or event, or advertisers may submit a computer formatted ad (pdf, tif, or jpeg formt) with graphics. Address requests for advertising rates and further information to the Editor, or telephone us at 413·528-4347 or e-mail montnews@localnet.com.

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